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To some, stories and storytelling are like stone knives and petroglyphs. Primitive societies had stories. And storytelling requires a wood fire and a dark night. But of course stories may be found not only at the family dinner table or with the last survivor of the Titanic. Stories are also in the next booth at a fast food restaurant, in the bleachers during the seventh-inning stretch, and in the classrooms (and in the teachers' lounge) of an elementary school. In our interest in children's welfare, we often forget that children are not simply passive receptacles for whatever treasure or trash the adult world throws at them, but are lively agents who are continually interacting with their environment. Children actively create meaning as readers, viewers, and listeners. The 39<sup>th</sup> Allerton Park Institute papers emphasize the critical need to connect children and narrative as a way to affect their development as listeners, readers, viewers, and evaluators of literature—and information in all forms.



ISBN 0-87845-105-6



5 2195 &gt;



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